What is claimed is:

1.   A method of specifying attributes of a variable to be optimized, comprising:

selecting a base variable value;

specifying a high variable value as the base variable value plus a portion of the base variable value; and

specifying a low variable value as the base variable value minus a portion of the base variable value.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the portion is greater than the base variable value.

3.   The method of claim 1, wherein the portion is a percentage of the base variable value.

4.   The method of claim 1, further comprising specifying a design tolerance that is a minimum step that the variable will change during optimization.

5.   A method of specifying a model for simulation, comprising:

specifying fewer than all attributes of the model to be considered during simulation; and

selecting one or more stored models having all attributes to be considered during simulation.

6.   The method of claim 5, further comprising searching stored models having all attributes to be considered during simulation for one or more models having attributes that match the specified attributes.

7.   The method of claim 5, further comprising:

comparing a value specified for a first attribute to values of that first attribute in the stored models and selecting each model having a first attribute value that matches the value specified for the first attribute; and

comparing a value specified for a second attribute to values of that second attribute in the selected models and further selecting each model having a second attribute value that matches the value specified for the second attribute.

8.   A method of specifying an optimization strategy, comprising:

specifying fewer than all attributes of the strategy to be followed during simulation; and

selecting one or more stored strategies having all attributes to be followed during simulation.